

# sonoma magazine

## 100 Best Sonoma Wines 2018

by **LINDA MURPHY**

A year ago, wildfires ripped through Sonoma County, destroying lives, homes, and businesses. Wine Country became Fire Country in the eyes of the world, yet paradoxically, flames did relatively little damage to local wineries and vineyards.

Paradise Ridge Winery, located in Santa Rosa's Fountaingrove area, was demolished by the Tubbs fire, but this was the worst of it for Sonoma wineries. A few suffered structural damage, which they've since repaired.

Backfires intentionally set protected many wineries, including Sonoma Valley's Arrowood Winery, from the conflagration.

But the major savers of Sonoma wines are the grapevines themselves, living plants with moisture in their veins. They served as natural firebreaks, with flames moving on to easier targets such as trees, brush, and structures.

Paradise Ridge is rebuilding, with its LOVE art sculpture standing strong after the fires. We celebrate that, and all recovery efforts, with this Top 100 Wines list. It's heavy in sparkling wines — to toast Sonoma's resilient personality — and with plenty of Chardonnays, Sauvignon Blancs, Pinot Noirs, and Zinfandels to please all crowds.

Welcome to resurgent Sonoma.



### **EnRoute Winery 2015 Brumaire Russian River Valley Chardonnay**

EnRoute is the Sebastopol winemaking outpost for the Far Niente / Nickel & Nickel outfit in Napa Valley. Winemaker Andrew Delos has produced a Chardonnay that's both rich and refreshing — a tough trick. Generous nectarine, green apple, and poached-pear flavors are framed by bracing natural acidity. Oak spice is an accent, not a dominant characteristic.